

Eternal Bliss – the essence of SIVA-GNANAM

“Eternal Bliss is your true form and being. Eternal Bliss is my true form and being. Eternal Bliss is the true form and being of all life. Eternal Bliss is your birthright. Eternal Bliss is my birthright. Eternal Bliss is the birthright of all beings.”

“Eternal Bliss is that from which all forms of life come into being. Eternal Bliss is that in which all forms of life dwell. It is in Eternal Bliss that all life ultimately disappears. It is Eternal Bliss that is the sustenance of all beings. Eternal bliss is the life of all beings. Eternal Bliss is the knowledge beyond all forms of knowledge. Eternal Bliss is the joy of all joys, Eternal Bliss is that which is the essence of all life.”

“This Eternal Bliss can never be separated from you. Although it is omnipotent it cannot even for a moment exist apart from you. Even though it is the knowledge of all forms of knowledge yet you cannot know it with the aid of your knowledge. *It is when your individual mind is destroyed that it manifests itself.* It comes into being when your individual self is no more. Like an image of salt which when used to sound the depth of an ocean is dissolved in it and becomes part of it, you who seek Eternal Bliss would be dissolved in it and become part of it, thus achieving deathless existence. That state in which your individual self no longer exists is called Nishtai. When you reach that state you reach perfection. Therefore, immerse yourself in the flood of Eternal Bliss and lose your individual self. It is when you lose your limited self that your great and exalted life begins. When your individuality is lost you would be engulfed in Eternal Bliss. It is in achieving Eternal Bliss that you attain true deliverance.”

“Eternal Bliss is not a thing that can be created anew, ‘*Has it come into existence anew? – through all serenity has it existed*’ sang Pattinathar. It has been existing like that forever. It cannot be created by anything else. Although it manifests itself when your mind is free from turmoil, yet it does not come into being only then. It has always been existing. It cannot be created by any kind of effort, by mantras or magic, by rituals, by Yoga practices, by pilgrimages and penances. It is when the individual mind ceases to exist that perfection is reached. The moment the mind is keenly bent on search for perfection, it would seem as if perfection has disappeared. All those Yoga practices and rituals which are performed by the aid of the individual mind harden it and stand as obstacles in the way of achieving Eternal Bliss. If you mean to get rid of the individual self as false, there is no purpose served in speaking of those rituals which are performed with the aid of the individual mind.”

“Eternal Bliss is without any kind of attribute. It does not depend on your following any prescribed mode of life. It does not depend for its manifestation on any of the four modes of life called Bramachariya (the life of a bachelor), Grahastha (the life of a householder), Vanaprastha (the life of a hermit), Sanyasa (the life of one who has renounced the world). It does not become different by virtue of external differences between the king, the prime

minister, the nobles the ordinary people, the rich, the poor, the Brahmin, the Vaishya, the Sudra, the male or the female. It exists equally and without any difference in all. It is not the exclusive property of any particular person or being. Everything in life belongs to it, but none can have any special right over it. It is the sustenance, at every moment, of countless forms of life. It exists without any kind of difference or distinction in the hearts of the wise as well as in the hearts of the ignorant. The Gnanis or the wise men, knowing its true nature will derive joy and happiness by that knowledge; but the ignorant without knowing its real nature would be sunk in sorrow. This is the only difference.”

“Eternal Bliss is without beginning and end. It exists everywhere and it cannot be said that it is confined to a particular place. It existed in the past, it exists now, it will exist in the future. It extends beyond the limits of the universe. It exists as the diversities of life. But it is without, any kind of diversity. It is beyond time, space and causation; it is omnipotent; it is limitless.”

“It is that which shines as the sun; it is that which as the moon sheds its cool beams of light on the earth; it is that which as the earth bears the burden of life. It spreads as the heavens above, it moves as the wind, it burns as the fire, it tastes as the water, it grows as the body, it exists as the life. It is that which feels as your sense of feeling; it is that which misleads as ignorance; it is that which understands as true knowledge; it is that which wins you as divine grace.”

The Guru continued to speak further thus:

“Please listen carefully; it is not a strange thing at all. I shall tell you who desire to achieve Eternal Bliss everything about it, without hiding anything from you. The God who is Eternal Bliss dwells in the shrine of your heart. Do not wander about under the mistaken belief that this or that object or being is God, or that it exists in this or that place. Do not fall into the error of believing that this person or that person is the Real Guru. Do not adopt any special mode of life.”

“Having known its true nature, keep that knowledge ever fresh in your mind and do whatever you are called upon to do by circumstances. If you don’t like to do anything you can be without doing anything at all. It does not matter what you do or what you do not do. It does not depend at all on what you accomplish or on what you do not accomplish. Do not desire to be free from Karma or to continue to work. Between action and inaction choose that which nature and environment had made your own.”

KARMA YOGA: “When you do work, be detached and do not care for the fruit of your toil. ‘You have the right to work only and not for the fruit of your work,’ says Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Do your work in the frame of mind of one who as an unattached witness of events says, ‘Let those, that are not bound to come, not come and let those that are bound to come, come’. The pain and sorrow that arise from doing work are not the result of doing work. They are the result of your caring for gain or loss, honor or disgrace, triumph or defeat in doing your work. Therefore, work without allowing your mind to be attached to the result of your work. While you remain detached in your mind, you act outwardly like those who care for the

fruit of their actions. If you continue to act like this, happiness will ever dwell in your heart and your mind will remain cool, calm, gentle and serene. This serenity of mind alone is the result of austerities practiced in numerous past births.

“Men who are under the power of the three Gnanas have to perform actions. A man has to work at least to keep his mind and body healthy. Therefore, do not feel despondent that you have to work. The object of doing work is not the completion or perfection of work but the perfection of the doer. Therefore, there is no reason to feel sorry that the work has not been completed or to rejoice because it has been completed. Eternal Bliss exists of itself and does not depend on anything else. Work does not create happiness. It is happiness that creates work. Work is not the cause of happiness; it is the result of it. Ordinary people think that they achieve happiness by performing actions or doing work. But the idea ultimately leads them to sorrow. Do not think unforgettable, inconceivable, limitless and deathless Ocean of Bliss. He also says of Him that as a sea of joy He entered the Heart of his devotees. He rejoices saying ‘Bliss I have now caught you firmly; I saw the Limitless Bliss in glorious Thillai.’ He says with pride that by approaching the Lord he has received endless Bliss as a gift. Thirunavukkarasu nayanar sings: ‘Happiness forever and no sorrow at all.’ Pattinathar says: ‘The almost unattainable Perfect Bliss has enveloped me within it.’ Arunakirinathar says: ‘Oh Lord of Six Faces! It is impossible to speak of this tremendous joy.’ Thayumanavar proclaims that ‘the Limitless Ocean of Bliss called Siva Pokam has overflowed its bounds and rolls as one perfect entity, and invites all men in the world to share in enjoying that Perfect Bliss.’ Other Saints too have spoken in similar terms. Therefore, let there be no doubt in your mind regarding this. You who desire Eternal Bliss meditate always in your mind that the Limitless Perfect Bliss is always with you. By so meditating realize that Truth in your life’s experience. By meditating alone, the mind which had been restlessly wandering in search of enjoyment in the objects of the world becomes calm and steady and peace fills it. Those who have achieved Eternal Bliss by the grace of the true Guru, by philosophical inquiry, and by religious activity are those who have attained deathless existence.”

Does Happiness reside in the Material Objects of the World?

INQUIRY: “Eternal Bliss does not exist apart from life. Even though it is so, the ordinary man sees nothing but misery in his heart. If anybody were to tell him that Eternal Bliss can never be separate from him, he would think that the person who so told him is mad. He who has never sought to find an answer to the questions: Where does happiness exist; how does it come into being; how can one achieve it; imagines that the material objects of the world are necessary for happiness. If for any reason he is deprived of them or is unable to have them, he mourns that life is misery, nothing but misery and endless misery. The cause of all this suffering is the ignorance which is the result of lack of diligent inquiry. “Eternal Bliss can never exist apart from us, we are born in Eternal Bliss, we live in Eternal Bliss, and we are ultimately engulfed in Eternal Bliss. There is neither birth nor death; there is nothing wanting, and we need nothing. It is the knowledge of this Truth that is called wisdom. It is not knowing this Truth that is called ignorance.”

“This ignorance is the obstacle to happiness ever filling your heart. The mind which is under the power of ignorance is always restless in its search for material objects which it imagines are necessary for its happiness. In the search for material objects of pleasure, anger, hatred, fear and sin come into being, and through them one experiences pain and sorrow. If the desired object is achieved, the mind feels satisfied and the pain disappears and the desire too dies. When the desire perishes happiness comes into being again. The happiness which is ever naturally with you seems to disappear when you are moved by desire, and to reappear when your desire is satisfied. The happiness, which disappears when you are moved by desire, and which reappears when your desire is satisfied, is imagined by you in your ignorance, to come into being from the objects you desired.”

“Since this is an important matter, it is necessary to inquire into it a little more deeply. In every experience of pleasure there are always three entities: the person who experiences the pleasure, the object which is sought to give the pleasure, and the pleasure which is the result of a relationship between the person and the object. The soul under the sway of ignorance is the enjoyer, the object desired is the thing to be enjoyed, the feeling that results from the union of these two is enjoyment. The seat of this enjoyment is the heart. ‘உள்ளம்’.

“Think in what state the mind is when it enjoys pleasure, before it enjoys pleasure, and after it enjoys pleasure. Before it enjoys pleasure it is restless under the urge of desire and is full of sorrow. When the desired object is achieved it becomes satisfied and freed from sorrow and desire. The mind becomes identified with the object desired and the feeling of separateness between the enjoyer and the enjoyed does not exist. It is in this state of mind that pleasure or enjoyment is born. If you think deeply you will know that the pleasure of the senses is nothing but an imperfect reflection of Perfect Bliss.”

True Wisdom

“Listen! Every man who desires to achieve Eternal Bliss should diligently inquire, where is Bliss, how does it exist, how could it be achieved? By diligent inquiry you can attain true happiness. We discussed earlier how the mind which is the seat of enjoyment exists at the time of enjoyment and before and after the enjoyment. We saw that the mind, before it enjoyed pleasure, was restless under the urge of desire and was full of sorrow, and that when the desired object was achieved it became satisfied, freed from sorrow and desire and identified with the object desired, thus losing the feeling of separateness between the enjoyer and the thing enjoyed, and achieving a state of peace and calm, and that pleasure or enjoyment resulted from this state of peace and calm.

“I shall give you an illustration of this. Once in a forest I saw a clear, limpid pool of water. It was without any waves on its surface. Above it in the sky the spotless sun was shining brightly. I looked into the pool and saw in it another sun. I knew that the sun was the reflection of the sun in the sky. I stood there a little while admiring the beauty of the reflected sun. The wind began to breathe gently and ripples appeared on the surface of the pool. The reflection of the sun did not appear as clearly as before. The wind rose high and waves began to roll on the surface of the pool. The reflection of the sun disappeared completely. But the sun in the sky

continued to shine as brightly as before. A little later the wind ceased, the waves disappeared and the pool became calm again. I saw the sun in the pool as clearly as at first.”

“You can compare the mind to the pool of water. That Being which is the life of all life and never separate from life and which as Existence, Knowledge and Bliss remains merely as a witness of events is the sun. The pleasure that was enjoyed is the reflection. The desire is the wind, and the restlessness and sorrow are the waves caused by the wind. The peace that comes into being at the time when the desire is satisfied is the calm that was seen when the wind subsided. Ponder deeply this illustration. When the desired object has been achieved the mind which has restlessly wandered under the urge of desire becomes free from desire and calm and cool like the pool of water. Then the sun of Knowledge, Existence and Bliss is reflected in it. It is that reflection which is the enjoyment.

Happiness the Result of Destruction of Desire

“From this experience a great truth is made manifest: namely, that even in ordinary sensual enjoyment it is only when the desired object is achieved and the desire is destroyed pleasure or enjoyment results. Therefore, if you desire to enjoy eternal happiness you should always be free from desire. It is because of this; sages have said:

‘Destroy desire destroy desire
Even the desire to be with God.’

‘If there is no freedom from desire
Will there exist God consciousness.’

Thiruvalluvar says:

‘Happiness will always exist
If the turmoil of the mind called desire dies.’

‘The moment the endless natural desires are destroyed Deathless happiness will come into being’.

“These couplets of Thiruvalluvar express clearly the truth I have taught you. Commit to memory these sayings and meditate on their profound meaning. You should realize without any shadow of doubt that the material objects of the world cannot create happiness. ‘If you desire anything, by that desire you would be caught in the chain of births. If you wish to achieve perfection you should free your mind from all disturbances of desire by true knowledge’, thus spoke Vashista to his disciple Sri Rama. The cause of births is desire arising out of ignorance which regards happiness which is not dependent on material objects of the world as dependent on them. You must get rid of this ignorance by true knowledge.”

“Ordinarily men rejoice in the possession of wife, children, wealth, houses, conveyance and other material objects. These material objects and the feeling that you possess or own them are the cause of the peace or calm that is in your mind. But they are not the cause of the happiness which results from the peace or calm. The sun that shone in the sky alone was the

cause of the reflection seen in the clear, calm pool of water. Even so the Atman which is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss is the cause of the happiness that is found when the mind becomes calm and serene. Even as a dog which bites a bare dry bone and by so biting injures its mouth and causes blood to flow from it and licks the blood imagining it to come from the bone, ordinary men imagine that the happiness that issues from the Atman which is in them as issuing from the desired objects of the world.”

The Wealth that never diminishes

“The Supreme Being which is the author of all kinds of enjoyment is ever within you. It is indeed your true form and being. You who have this immeasurable wealth within you, why do you wander like a beggar in search of external objects of the world? Instead of ever drinking the nectar of the Gods, called Eternal Bliss why do you desire the petty little sensual enjoyments that you find in the material objects of the world?”

Emphasizing the Truth that Happiness does not reside in the Material Objects of the World.

“Let us inquire further whether the material objects of the world are capable of giving us real happiness. If it is contended that they are capable of doing so, they should always cause happiness. But we do not find it so in our experience. Those that give us pleasure or happiness at one moment fail to give us any pleasure at another. The toys, the dress, the food, the songs and the books that delighted us in our infancy do not appeal to us our youth. Even so, riches, women and position which seemed to give us pleasure in our youth fail to do so in our old age.”

“Besides, that which was the cause of happiness at one time becomes the cause of sorrow at another. Two friends who regarded themselves as if they were of one mind and body fall out and become bitter enemies each causing trouble to the other. The little children who delighted their parents by their looks, their dress, their conduct and their prattle, in later life cause immense trouble to their parents. Sometime they become the cause even of their death. Riches, women and position which are considered indispensable for a happy life become sometimes the cause of one’s death.”

“Further that which gives pleasure to one might cause pain to another; giving pain to others seems to give pleasure to some. That which gives great happiness once does not give as much happiness later.”

“Please listen carefully! If it is in the nature of any material object to give you happiness, it must continue to give that happiness at all times. That which by virtue of its innate nature gives you happiness should not at any other time be the cause of sorrow. If it is said that it is in the nature of any object to give you both pleasure and pain, then such a contradiction in attributes cannot exist together at one and the same time. It may be contended that it is in the nature of an object to give at a particular time pleasure to one and pain to another; even this contention cannot be accepted because the difference in the effect on the minds of two persons is the result of the respective condition of the two minds and not of the nature of the material

object. Therefore, it is wise to conclude that there is nothing in the nature of material objects as such which can give us happiness.”

“It is we who give that attribute to material objects which bring us happiness. Having given, in our imagination, that attribute of causing pleasure, to a material object, we enjoy that pleasure and when that material object disappears we experience sorrow and imagine that it is due to its disappearance. Seeing a friend of ours rejoicing in the possession of material objects, we too seek to acquire like him those objects, and rejoice when we are able to acquire them. But we are sorrowful either when we cannot acquire them or when we lose them. Whatever may be the material object which we imagine as indispensable to our happiness, it is only when we acquire that object that we are happy. So long as we continue to imagine that material objects have the power to give us happiness, so long would our minds be restless and full of sorrow and we could continue to remain the slaves of those objects.”

“Therefore, my son, having known by your diligent inquiry that there is nothing in the material world which can give you happiness, destroy your attachment to worldly objects. If there is no such attachment, internal or external, your mind gets under your control and peace fills it.”

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